



Canal
Corporation

2023

Empire State Trail Town Action Agenda



City of Lockport

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Background

Parks & Trails New York (PTNY) and the New York State Canal Corporation developed the Empire State Trail Town program to help upstate communities recognize and capture the economic value of the Empire State Trail, the nation's longest single-state multi-use trail. With the 750-mile trail's completion in 2020, the Erie Canalway Trail—the east-west leg of the statewide system—has continued to be one of the state's premier outdoor recreation destinations. The Empire State Trail Town program was designed to build capacity and guide communities through the process of identifying ways they can transform into trail-friendly destinations where visitors want to stay, explore, and spend.

The **Empire State Trail Town program** began in 2022 with the Village of Brockport as a pilot community, and continued in 2023 with three additional communities: City of Lockport, Village of

Newark and City of Rome. Having been selected for their already high quality trail-based services and amenities and demonstrated commitment to policies geared towards trail users, the selected communities worked with PTNY throughout the year to identify opportunities and develop the tools to more effectively harness visitation to the renowned long-distance trail in their backyard.

Over the course of nine months, Lockport worked with PTNY to develop a network of local partners committed to the Trail Town initiative, conduct research and assessment, and develop promotional resources and strategies. In this document, the work completed through the course of the program is summarized to guide Lockport's advancement as a Trail Town. Upon adoption of this Action Agenda, Lockport will be recognized as an officially certified Empire State Trail Town.

Empire State Trail Town Goals

Make communities more trail-user friendly.



- Increase the frequency with which residents and visitors walk or bike both on and off the trail

Help communities realize economic benefits of the Canalway Trail.



- Increase the number of Canalway Trail users who spend money either at retail businesses or at a bar or restaurant as part of their trip
- Increase the number of Canalway Trail users who choose the community for an overnight stay

Empire State Trail Town Objectives

NETWORK: Form a network of individuals (including representatives of the municipality, engaged residents, volunteers, and members of the business community) dedicated to the Trail Town vision

RESEARCH: Conduct research and assessment to identify each Trail Town's strengths and areas for improvement, as well as understand current use of the trail

PROMOTION: Increase the visibility of the Trail Towns as destinations

ADVANCEMENT: Establish a plan and process to guide continued work toward Trail Town goals beyond the direct assistance provided by PTNY

Program Overview

After the three selected communities for 2023 were finalized, the technical assistance provided through the program began with a virtual Trail Town Orientation. This first virtual convening provided an introduction to the program and space to network with the other trail towns in the program.

Following the orientation, Lockport's first task was to form a Trail Town steering committee that incorporated representatives from the city as well as committed partners, local businesses and bicycling advocates. Lockport's steering committee was spearheaded by Lockport Main Street, with involvement from volunteers and engaged community members and feedback from Mayor Michelle Roman.

With the steering committee in place, Lockport was able to begin the first task - a **Trail Town Self-Assessment**. The assessment encouraged Lockport to take initial stock of their recreation and hospitality assets, and to start thinking about the strengths and weaknesses of the city in terms of attracting bicycle tourists and encouraging residents to walk or bike.

In May, a trail count effort was launched to collect information on trail use throughout the summer. With input from the Trail Town steering committee, PTNY installed an EcoVisio electronic trail counter on the Erie Canalway Trail/Empire State Trail at the intersection with Mill Street on the east side of the city. PTNY also provided a webinar that trained trail town committee members on how to conduct manual trail counts to capture an enhanced level of data, including a breakdown by mode use. Manual counts were conducted by volunteers at Mill Street and the State Street trailhead in September. An analysis of trail count data can be found on pages 8-9.

In early June, PTNY held a two-part participatory workshop in Lockport, with an evening Placemaking Workshop on June 5th, followed by a morning Bike Around Workshop the following day. The Placemaking Workshop provided a hands-on opportunity for about fifteen Trail Town steering committee members and other interested community members to learn more about outdoor recreation tourism and continue the conversations that the Trail Town Self-Assessment



started. Through an interactive mapping exercise, workshop participants identified Lockport's top assets (including places, businesses, events, and experiences), as well as gaps or potential areas for improved connectivity, services, or amenities. The following morning, PTNY led a group bike ride around Lockport to highlight some of the assets and gaps identified during the previous evening's workshop. Many different challenges and opportunities were brought up during these conversations, but some of the major takeaways are summarized on page 11.

In order to capitalize on the momentum and ideas generated during the workshop, PTNY compiled a **Short-Term Recommendations** document for Lockport, outlining actions that the city could take immediately to improve the trail user experience and start better capitalizing on trail tourism that same summer.

One of the recommendations that came out of the workshop was to continue to educate local businesses on the value of trail tourism. To that end, Lockport continued to encourage more businesses to apply to be certified as "**Bike Friendly New York**". As a result of these efforts, Lockport now has a total of eleven Bike Friendly New York certified

businesses. More information about the certification program and the participating businesses can be found on page 7.

In the second week of July, Lockport's Trail Town Committee helped coordinate a welcome celebration for riders on PTNY's annual Cycle the Erie Canal bike tour. The event introduced over seven hundred cyclists to Lockport, welcoming them with fanfare, a pop-up bike shop, and a bike corral to encourage riders to hop off their bikes and explore the local history and businesses.

In August, Lockport turned its attention to the next phase of the program, which involved taking a look at its assets with the eye of compiling them into an informational resource that trail users could use to plan their visits. PTNY used this information to inform the development of a **Lockport Trail Town landing page**, hosted on the promotional website for the Erie Canalway Trail, www.cycletheeriecanal.com.

2023 Trail Town Wins

In response to the short-term recommendations identified by PTNY and other conversations held during the the Placemaking and Bike Around workshops, Lockport advanced several Trail Town priorities over the summer and fall of 2023:

- Executing a high-quality, coordinated experience for Cycle the Erie Canal bike tour participants with support from many local partners and businesses. A major upgrade this year was the installment of temporary bike corrals for cyclists to leave their bikes while they explored.

In addition to the work undertaken in partnership with PTNY, Lockport and other local partners have been working steadily to advance several projects and programs closely related to the Trail Town mission, including:

- Celebrating the completion of the **Lock Tenders Tribute Monument** in September.
- Finalizing the Comprehensive Planning process for Lockport.
- Advancing the Lockport Rotary's community service project to restore and improve the 3/4 mile-long series of four City mini-parks paralleling the Erie Canal from the top of Market Street hill to the Market Street intersection with Vine Street. In 2023, the Lockport Rotary received an **NYS Canal System Tourism Infrastructure grant** to improve upon the existing comfort station amenities with a new open air picnic pavilion near the Adam Street lift bridge crossing the Erie Canal in Lockport.
- Continuing to make strides toward the **Lockport Lowertown Loop** project. In 2022, the City of Lockport received an NYS Canalway Grant to focus work on the trail that loops the neighborhoods on either side of the canal and re-open the comfort station at the Adams Street bridge.



The last six figures of the Lock Tenders Tribute Monument were installed in September 2023. Photo Credit Jeff Tracy, courtesy of Lockport Union Sun & Journal.

Existing Conditions

About Lockport

The City of Lockport is home to about 21,000 residents and is located in Niagara County, on the ancestral homelands of the Haudenosaunee and Wenrohronon. Situated near the western end of the Erie Canal, Lockport owes its existence to the construction of the Erie Canal, having been mapped out in 1818 in response to the designated future route of the Erie Canal. It is home to the renowned "Flight of Five" Locks, without which the Erie Canal would not have been able to continue west over the Niagara Escarpment. Today, Lockport is a hub for experiencing and learning about the Erie Canal firsthand, with boat cruises that take visitors through the modern locks, the Erie Canal Discovery Center, and the recently completed Lock Tenders Tribute Monument. Lockport is home to many vibrant local businesses within walking distance of the canal.

Destination Highlights

Locks Heritage District - Lockport is home to the famed 19th century "flight of five" Erie Canal locks. The intact set of five locks, dating to 1862, retain their massive, wooden manually operated gates - in working order! Visitors can also enjoy the Lock Tenders Tribute Monument and the Locks District Museum throughout the fall and winter months.

Lockport Locks & Erie Canal Cruises - Be elevated to the 49-foot top of the Niagara Escarpment in the only double-set locks on the Erie Canal. Enjoy being "locked through" every day from May to October on one of the many two-hour narrated, handicap-accessible tours.

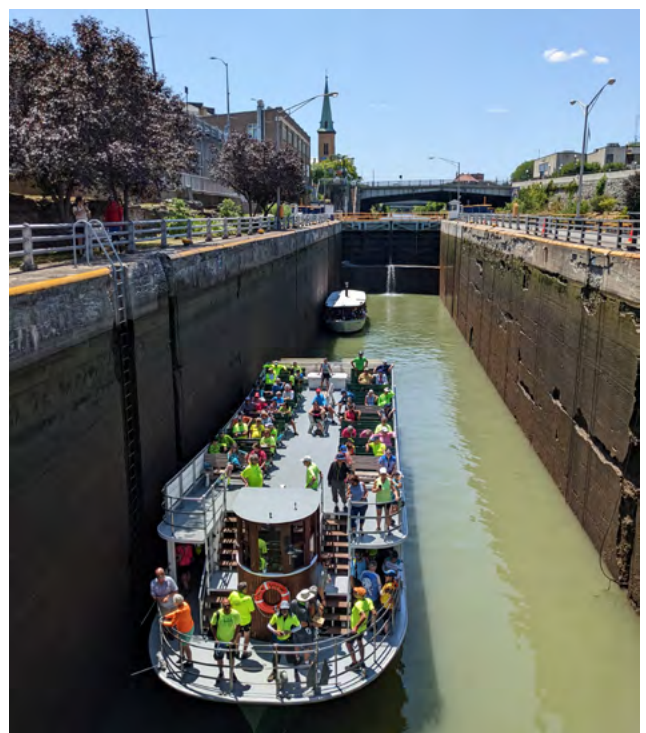
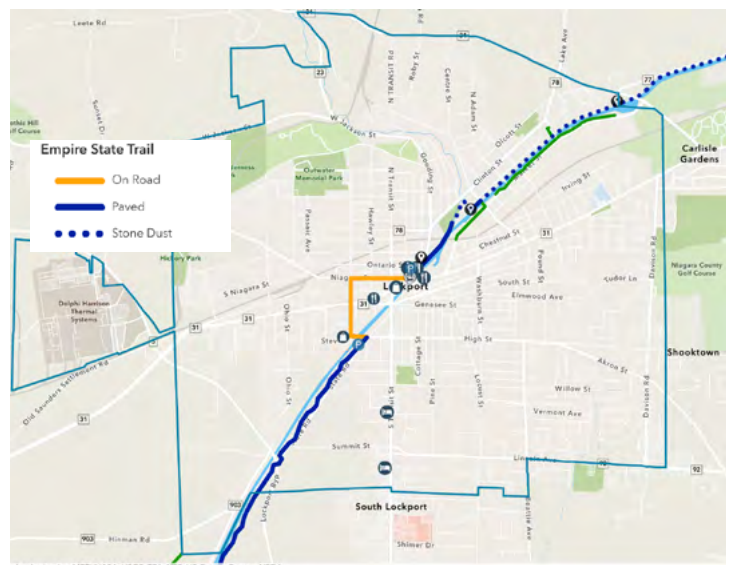
Erie Canal Discovery Center - This multi-media interactive museum transports you back to the 1820's and the early days of the Erie Canal. This three-level building also houses the City of Lockport Visitor Center and the "Lock, Stock & Barrel" Museum Shop on the ground floor.

Widewaters Marina - Located on Market Street to the east of downtown, the marina features a boat launch and marina slips and offers an ideal launching point for boating, canoeing, kayaking, and fishing. There are even kayak, canoe, and bicycle rentals by Erie Canal Boat Company - Lockport.

Trail Inventory

Lockport has approximately 3.9 miles of the Erie Canalway Trail/Empire State Trail running through the city, 78% of which is off-road (a combination of paved and stonedust).

Map of Lockport



Bike Friendly New York Certified Businesses

Launched in 2017, **Bike Friendly New York** (BFNY) is a bicycle friendly business certification program administered by Parks & Trails New York (PTNY) and the New York State Canal Corporation. BFNY aims to recognize and promote businesses that provide special accommodations for bicyclists. A wide range of businesses are eligible for bike-friendly certification, including restaurants and bars, lodging, shops, and museums.

Bike friendliness is not a “yes or no” quality, and the steps that businesses take to cater to cyclists vary. Above all, bike friendly businesses value cyclists as customers. Therefore, they strive to meet the unique needs of cyclists.

At the most basic level, businesses must meet the following requirements:

1. Have a physical location, which is open to the general public and has hours of operation clearly posted at the location and/or online.
2. Be located near, and easily accessible from, a greenway trail.
3. Have an identified parking area for bicycles (this can be a public bike rack, a bike parking area in front of the business, covered and secure bike parking indoors, or another solution)



In addition, businesses must meet a few category-specific criteria. For example, Food and Drink Service establishments must have a menu posted outside and/or online and overnight accommodations must offer one night stays and provide covered and secured bike storage. All criteria can be found at ptny.org/bikefriendly.

Lockport was already home to many Bike Friendly NY certified businesses, and added two more (Shamus Lockport and Windsor Village Shops) through outreach conducted during the Empire State Trail Town program.

Bike Friendly NY Certified Businesses in Lockport

Business Name	Category
Erie Canal Discovery Center	Information
Best Western Plus Lockport	Accommodation
Lockport Inn & Suites	Accommodation
B&D's Bagels and Locks	Food & Drink Service
Steamworks Coffee Roasters	Food & Drink Service
Lake Effect Artisan Ice Cream	Food & Drink Service
Shamus Lockport	Food & Drink Service
Windsor Village Shops	Retail
Motherland	Retail
Cornerstone CFCU Arena	Attraction
Heinrich Chevrolet	Other

As of November 2023

Trail Use Counts & Analysis

Collecting trail user count data is important for understanding the potential market for trail user-oriented services and amenities, as well as for understanding how and when people are using the trail so that the community can best serve their needs. PTNY estimates that the Erie Canalway Trail/Empire State Trail through Lockport sees at least 40,000 visits annually.

Electronic Counters

Trail count data was collected using an electronic counter on the northeast side of the city where the Erie Canalway Trail/Empire State Trail intersects with Mill Street and through manual spot counts at two locations (Mill Street and State Road trailhead). The electronic trail counter used infrared pyroelectric technology to count the people passing within range of the sensor by detecting body temperature, and collected data 24 hours a day at one hour intervals for the period it was installed.

Monthly Trail Use

Analysis was conducted on the trail use data to determine trends across different time scales. Trail use was fairly consistent throughout the summer and fall, with the highest average trail use occurring in May. Memorial Day weekend saw a huge surge in trail use, with almost 900 visitors passing the trail counter on Memorial Day itself.

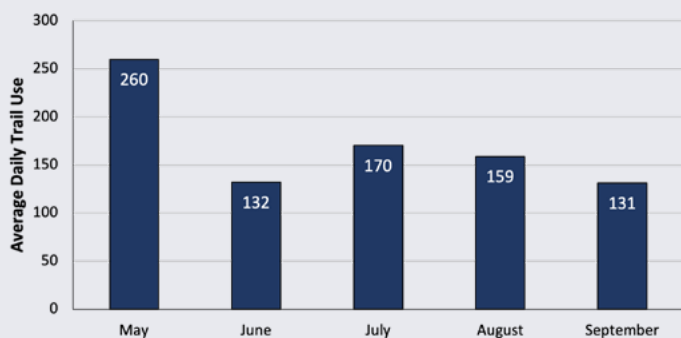
Trail Use by Day of Week & Time of Day

The trail is used more on weekends than on weekdays. Across all days, use peaks in the morning around 9am or 10am, but remains relatively consistent throughout the day until it dips in the evening. These trends indicate that the trail is likely used primarily for recreation, as opposed to commuting. It should be noted that the day that Cycle the Erie Canal passed through Lockport (7/9/23) was removed from the data set for the average hourly analysis.

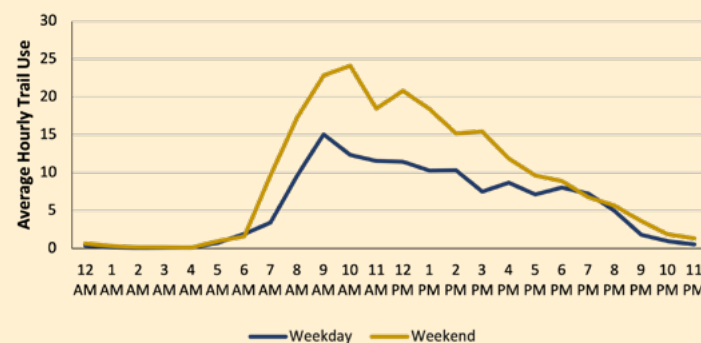
Annual Trail Use Estimate

By applying [extrapolation methodology](#) to the available electronic trail use data, PTNY estimates that the trail sees over 40,000 visits per year at Mill Street.

Average Daily Trail Use by Month
May 16, 2023 - September 11, 2023



Average Hourly Trail Use (Weekday vs Weekend)
May 16, 2023 - September 11, 2023



Month	Monthly Use	Daily Average
May (part)	4,158	260
June	3,962	132
July	5,277	170
August	4,928	159
September (part)	1,444	131
Recorded Total	19,769	166
Estimated Annual Use	40,639	111

Installing the electronic counter at the crossing with Mill Street



Manual Counts

Manual/Observational counts were conducted by volunteers who made ticks on a clipboard for each passing trail user for two-hour periods according to the guidelines established for **observational counts**. This data was then used to inform breakdown by mode use and estimate longer periods of trail use using the National Bicycle and Pedestrian Documentation Project (NBPD) **extrapolation methodology**.

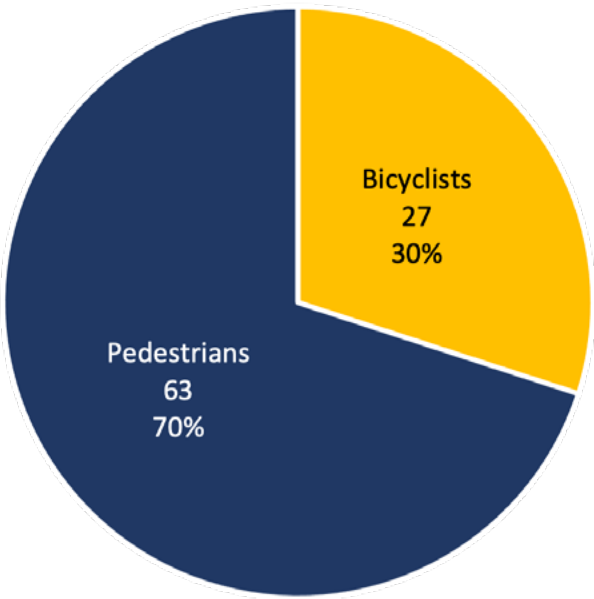
Manual volunteer trail counts were used to provide an additional level of detail to this analysis— namely the breakdown of trail use by mode at different locations along the trail. According to the counts, pedestrians were the primary users of the trail at Mill Street, while cyclists were the primary users at State Road. Mill Street is closer to the Locks Heritage

district and Lockport’s downtown, which may provide some explanation for this trend. It should be noted that this data is limited to two, two-hour counting windows and the counts at the various locations were not completed on the same day, making direct comparison difficult.

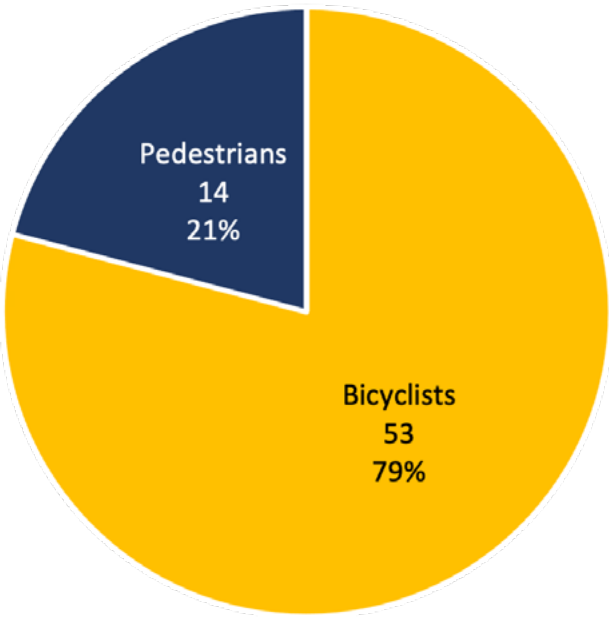
The manual counts were also used to inform an annual use estimate, calculated using the NBPD extrapolation methodology. To have confidence in the estimate, four, two-hour counts are typically required. As that was not available for Lockport, annual estimates were calculated based on available data at each site. Estimates should be taken with caution given the limited data available at these sites.

Location	Dates	Bicyclists		Pedestrians		Total Counted	Estimated Annual Use
		Count	Pct.	Count	Pct.		
Mill Street	8/26/2023; 8/29/2023	27	30%	63	70%	90	55,304
State Road	8/22/2023; 9/2/2023	53	79%	14	21%	67	47,124

Mill Street
Breakdown by Mode



State Road
Breakdown by Mode



Visitor Resources

Promotion of available services and amenities is crucial for connecting visiting cyclists to what they need in order to enjoy their stay. In recent years, Lockport has invested significant resources in promoting itself as a destination and has very strong marketing materials, although none are specifically targeted at visiting trail users.

- Lockport's **Erie Canal Discovery Center**, located at 24 Church Street, Lockport, NY just a few blocks from the trail is the primary information hub and resource center for visiting trail users, and is a huge asset.
- Lockport's city website has a **Parks and Recreation** page that features information about the city park system and water recreation opportunities, but no mention of trails, trail access, or trail amenities.
- Discover Lockport, Lockport's tourism website is a wonderful resource for visitors seeking more information about Lockport. It has a **Sports and Recreation** page, which does have information about the Canalway Trail, but no information about the statewide Empire State Trail and no information specifically for trail users visiting Lockport.
- Lockport **Locks District** website is a great marketing website for Lockport's Locks District and the attractions in it. Despite its location directly on the Empire State Trail/Canalway Trail, there is no mention of the long-distance trails.
- Lockport **Main Street's website** is a hub of information about local events.
- Walking tours of the Locks District, including TravelStorys and **Riley's Way**
- Lockport Main Street "Welcome to Lockport" Brochure



Promotional materials available at the welcome table for Cycle the Erie Canal bike tour riders

Overall Assessment

Through the Trail Town Self-Assessment, the public Placemaking Workshop, and the PTNY-led Bike Around ride and assessment, strengths and areas for improvement were identified. The results of these conversations and assessments are summarized below, and helped inform this plan's recommendations.

Strengths

- Strong identity and community pride tied to the canal and the Flight of Five locks
- Unique, high-quality local businesses
- Farmers Market and other local events that bring the community together along the trail
- Discover Niagara Shuttle's "Lockport Route" which permits bicycles. The route runs between Niagara Falls and Lockport, and then runs a constant loop to all 8 stops in Lockport before returning to Niagara Falls.
- Erie Canal Discovery Center is staffed and serves as an information hub for visiting trail users
- Strong Main Street association (Lockport Main Street)
- Powerful momentum from the completion of Lock Tenders Tribute Monument
- In the process of completing a new City Comprehensive Plan
- Municipal Widewaters Marina, privately owned restaurant, and kayak and bicycle rentals.
- Dynamic Adopt-a-Trail group that adopts all of the off-road trail on the west side of Lockport (**Trailkeepers**)

Opportunities

- Beautification - there is the potential for more public art or gardens along the trail to feature and highlight cycling
- Wayfinding - there is a need for more wayfinding to direct trail users to places of interest
- Information hub - the Discovery Center and Discover Lockport website could have more information and resources for cyclists and be trained to answer frequently asked questions
- Already significant amounts of trail on both sides of the canal on the east side - potential to create a loop route using trails on both sides of the Erie Canal.

Areas for Improvement

- Many of Lockport's businesses, including Main Street, are not directly visible from the ECT/EST and the best route to reach Main Street is not clear.
- Main Street does not feel safe to bike on.
- There are several locations where the trail crosses roads that present safety concerns for cyclists (Lockport Bypass Rd, State Rd)
- All of the current overnight accommodations are located on Transit St, which is not bike friendly and is intimidating for cyclists to ride on
- Confusion about parking in bike lane on Niagara St
- The gateways/entrances to the city are not entirely clear. The canal maintenance facility on the east side is particularly unwelcoming.
- Lack of wayfinding/directional signage on the route of the trail, particularly where it goes on-road.
- Lack of pedestrian-scale wayfinding signage to destinations of interest, including the Locks District, the Discovery Center, and Main Street.
- No unified bike advocacy group or group that meets to ride socially
- Potentially too close to Buffalo to be the first overnight destination for long-distance trail users traveling west to east.



Recommendations

Short Term Recommendations

Strategies that can be implemented with minimal lead time before or during the next tourism season.

1. Replace and augment existing Empire State Trail/Erie Canalway Trail wayfinding signage, especially focusing on sections where the trail goes on-road to provide clear routing through the city.

- ◆ Conduct an on-the-ground inventory of ECT/EST signs that are faded, misleading and/or missing through Lockport, focusing on the following locations listed from west to east:
 - Steven St intersection at end of State St sidepath; Intersection of Prospect St; Prospect St; Prospect St at intersection with Niagara St; Niagara St at intersection with Transit St; Intersection of Church St/Cottage St; Canal St; Upson Park
- ◆ Coordinate with NYS Canal Corporation's Trail Manager, NYS OPRHP's Statewide Trails Program Planner, and the NYS DOT Region 5 Bike/Pedestrian Coordinator to identify a path forward to replace faded Erie Canalway Trail signs and add additional Empire State Trail signs and arrows where necessary.

Faded and damaged signage on Steven St.



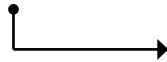
- ◆ Until this signage is updated, employ temporary wayfinding guidance such as sandwich boards, lawn signs, or temporary paint at critical junctions that have historically caused confusion for trail users, including the following priority locations:
 - At Canal St heading east, direct trail users to the right down ramp to continue on the ECT/EST and to the left to access the Discovery Center for information and visitor resources.
 - At the intersection of the trail and Stevens St (bridge), use temporary signage to direct trail users to turn left onto Stevens St to continue on the EST.

2. Seek to expand low-cost or free overnight options for visiting trail users.

- ◆ Develop processes and additional infrastructure if needed to allow for single-night biker/hiker camping at the city-managed Widewaters Marina, including access to showers and laundry facilities for cyclists. Per agreement with NYS Canal Corporation, the marina is permitted for 4-6 campsites. For examples of municipally-operated biker/hiker camping accommodations, refer to the [Brockport Welcome Center](#) and the [Little Falls Marina](#). Once established, promote the camping opportunity on Discover Lockport's website and submit the campsite to PTNY to be included on their online maps using [this form](#).
- ◆ Continue to coordinate with the Marvin's at Wide Waters to permit single-night biker/hiker camping and promote the availability of this option through the restaurant's website, local platforms and statewide partners. Submit the campsite to PTNY to be included on their online maps using [this form](#).
- ◆ Encourage local members of the community to join [Warmshowers](#), a reciprocal hospitality website and app designed for touring cyclists.

3. Continue to educate Lockport's visitor-oriented business about the benefits of bike-friendliness and encourage them to implement bike-friendly infrastructure and policies.

- ◆ Use Lockport Main Street's platform and individual site visits to communicate the benefits of **Bike Friendly NY certification** (attracting more trail users, listing on PTNY's **Lockport Trail Town landing page and map**, visual identification through window decal) and help businesses apply.
- ◆ Encourage businesses to signal that they value trail users by "putting a bike on it." This can look like anything from bicycle-related storefront displays, a beer, ice cream, or sandwich named to commemorate the trail, bike or trail-themed souvenirs, or other little details. These visual cues will help trail users know that they are welcome.



4. Promote all of the amenities and resources Lockport has for visiting trail users.

- ◆ Solidify the Lockport Discovery Center as a Welcome Center for cyclists
 - ◆ Make sure staff is educated about what cyclists need to know (e.g. Where can trail users stay overnight? Where can they rent a bicycle or find repair tools? How do they get back on the trail?)
 - ◆ Have a bike pump, patch kits, and basic tools on hand, or be able to direct trail users to the fix-it station nearby.
- ◆ Create dedicated content for visiting trail users on the Discover Lockport website for use in online and print materials
 - ◆ The website should provide links to **Lockport's Trail Town landing page** on www.CycletheErieCanal.com, the **Empire State Trail website**, and include everything a visiting trail user would need to know about Lockport's recreational amenities and services, including where to stay (Bike Friendly NY lodging and camping facilities), the availability of long-term parking at the Discovery Center and process for who to alert when leaving a car, how to use the Discover Niagara Shuttle with a bicycle, and information about the Discovery Center. Additional content may be pulled directly from the Trail Town landing page.

5. Adopt all of the available stretches of the Erie Canalway Trail through Lockport.

- ◆ Seek volunteer group(s) to adopt the Erie Canalway Trail on the east side of Lockport. From Canal Place to the city line at Cold Springs Road (and beyond) is available for adoption. Refer to the guidelines on PTNY's **Adopt-a-Trail website**.



Windsor Village Shops is a prime example of the strategy "put a bike on it" to demonstrate to trail users that they are welcome.

Long Term Recommendations

Strategies that require increased investment may just require a longer time to be accomplished (2-5 years)

1. Incorporate bicycle and pedestrian wayfinding from the trail to local destinations into Lockport's wayfinding signage plan.

Note: The NYS Canal Corporation is developing a set of design guidelines. All signage on Canal Corporation-owned land should be in accordance with these design guidelines, expected to be released in 2024.

Also, be sure that all wayfinding is consistent with agreed upon best routes between destinations (see Long Term Recommendation #3)

Priority locations for signage:

- ◆ **Canal St:** Potential destinations: Flight of Five/Locks District, ECT/EST, Information (Discovery Center), Downtown (Main St), Lodging (on Transit)
- ◆ **Intersection of Trail, State St and Stevens St:** Potential destinations: Downtown (Main St), Flight of Five/Locks District, Information (Discovery Center), ECT/EST, Lodging (on Transit)

2. Establish gateway elements on the trail at the west and east entrances to the city to invite trail users to visit.

Gateway elements can include public art, landscaping/beautification, lighting, community wayfinding signage and maps, and improved amenities and infrastructure to make it clear that trail visitors are welcome.

Approaching from the west:

State Street Trailhead:

- ◆ Engage with NYS Canal Corporation to discuss more possibilities to work with Adopt-a-Trail volunteers to further beautify the trailhead
- ◆ Engage with NYS Canal Corporation to discuss the possibility of improving the transition from off-road trail (NYS Canal Corporation-owned trail) to on-road riding on Stevens Street (City of Lockport-owned street)

Approaching from the east:

Upson Park and Canal Work Yard

- ◆ Trail Adopters may play a role in enhancing the trail through Upson Park and around the Canal Work Yard to make it more welcoming. Depending on the level of beautification, there may be need for a permit.



Unclear signage and unwelcoming trail around the Canal Work Yard

3. Prioritize bicycle and pedestrian connection and access to trails throughout the city.

- ◆ Determine a preferred route between the Locks District and Main Street with input from the community. Once the preferred route is chosen, seek to improve bicycle connectivity and install wayfinding signage to direct trail users to Main Street.
- ◆ Prioritize bicycle connectivity to areas zoned for lodging, especially along Transit St. →
- ◆ Implement traffic calming measures on Main Street to make it more bicycle and pedestrian friendly.
- ◆ Undertake a citywide Active Transportation and/or trails plan.
- ◆ Create and brand a fully connected loop trail that utilizes already established trail on both sides of the canal, potentially closing the loop at multiple locations, including a pedestrianized Adam St bridge and the Cold Springs bridge further east. →
- ◆ Work to ensure that all trail intersections with roadways are safe and accessible for trail users of all ages and abilities.
 - ◆ Advocate for enhanced pedestrian safety at the NYS DOT owned/managed Lockport Bypass Rd crossing.
 - ◆ Improve the currently deteriorated transitions from trail to roadway at the Mill St and N Adam St crossings in accordance with **Empire State Trail Design guide**.

Screencaptures of Transit St/NY-78 that demonstrate the lack of cycling infrastructure to most of Lockport's overnight accommodations. Photo credit Google Streetview.



Trail on the south side of the canal that could be connected to form a full loop.



Deteriorated trail crossing at N Adams St



Implementation

It doesn't do any good for a plan to just sit on a shelf, so Lockport has identified a series of next steps to keep the Empire State Trail Town momentum moving forward.

» Lockport will commit to this Empire State Trail Town action agenda

Lockport intends to pursue a common council resolution to adopt the Empire State Trail Town action agenda.

» The Trail Town Steering Committee will identify a sustainable path forward

Lockport identified a need to reevaluate their current steering committee structure. Currently, the committee is made up of a combination of nonprofits, government officials, and community members, who all have different schedules, workloads, and interests.

Moving forward, the steering committee seeks to:

1. Identify a “champion” to take on a leadership role in spearheading the Trail Town committee moving forward
2. Hold an interest meeting in early 2024 (by January 15) to recruit new members, raise awareness of the opportunity to join the Trail Town committee, and further determine Trail Town priorities
3. Hold regular meetings to keep conversations moving on how to advance the Trail Town recommendations identified in this document
4. Establish sub-committees or leads to take on specific projects and carry out the day-to-day tasks

Partners to include in the Committee moving forward:

- Lockport Main Street (primary contact)
- Locks Heritage District
- City Officials
- Businesses (Windsor Village, etc.)
- Volunteer Organizations (Lockport Rotary, etc.)

Lockport Main Street compiled a draft **implementation plan** for 2024 which will be used to drive the conversation once the steering committee is solidified.

» The Trail Town Steering Committee will identify and secure funding to advance Trail Town projects

Potential funding sources could include:

- **2023 TAP/CMAQ/CRP**
- **Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo**
- **Grigg Lewis Foundation**
- **NYS Canal System Tourism Infrastructure and Events Grants**
- **Niagara County Center for Economic Development - William G. Maynes**
- **Rails-to-Trails Conservancy**
- **Project for Public Spaces Community Placemaking Grants**
- **League of American Bicyclists Community Spark Grants**
- **People for Bikes**

» Lockport will communicate progress on the Empire State Trail Town recommendations

Lockport Main Street will promote progress on Trail Town initiatives through their social media pages

» Lockport will ensure that it maintains Empire State Trail Town designation in subsequent years

Lockport will make sure that it continues to meet Trail Town criteria as set forth in the **Empire State Trail Town handbook**.

Prior to each tourism season (April of each year), the Trail Town steering committee will verify with PTNY that the information on the Trail Town landing page is accurate.

Each year, PTNY will host a virtual meeting for all Trail Towns to provide updates about the Empire State Trail and Trail Town initiative and allow Trail Towns to share progress on their action agendas. Lockport will submit a brief written update prior to the meeting and send at least one representative.

Parks & Trails New York

33 Elk Street
Albany, NY 12207
(518) 434-1583
ptny@ptny.org

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About Parks & Trails New York

Parks & Trails New York (PTNY) is New York's leading statewide advocate for parks and trails, dedicated since 1985 to improving our health, economy, and quality of life through the use and enjoyment of green space. PTNY works to expand, protect, and promote a network of parks, trails, and open spaces throughout our state for use and enjoyment by all. For more information, visit www.ptny.org.



About the New York State Canal Corporation

The New York State Canal Corporation runs the New York State Canal System, which includes the Erie, Champlain, Oswego and Cayuga-Seneca canals. Spanning 524 miles, the waterway links the Hudson River with the Great Lakes, the Finger Lakes and Lake Champlain. In 2017, the Canal Corporation celebrated the 200th anniversary of the groundbreaking for the Erie Canal, which occurred in the city of Rome on July 4, 1817. The Canal System includes the Canalway Trails, a network of approximately 420 miles of multiple-use trails across upstate New York. The Canalway Trails follows the towpaths of both active and historic sections of the New York State Canal System as well as adjacent abandoned rail corridors. Together, the canals and trails create a world-class recreationway that is a vibrant, scenic, and unique New York resource. To learn more about the New York State Canal and Canalway Trail System or to obtain a free map, please call 1-800-4CANAL4 or visit the Canal Corporation's website at www.canals.ny.gov.